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DEPT FOR AF/SPG, S/CRS
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SUDAN ARMY ATTACKS UNAMID CONVOY

REF: 2007 KHARTOUM 2044

11. (SBU) On January 8, UNAMID claimed that Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) attacked a UNAMID 29-truck convoy on January 7 at approximately 2200 near Tine, West Darfur located 125 kilometers north of Geneina. UNAMID spokesmen Nourreddine Mezni told poloff on January 9 that Joint Special Representative Rudolph Adada met with Under-Secretary Mutriff Sidique on January 8 about the attack. Mezni said that the GoS made no apologies for the attack (nor did it deny the attack) but agreed to a joint UN-GOS investigation into the cause of the attack. Mezni said the investigation would start as soon as possible. Mezni said that UNAMID Force Commander General Martin Agwai is returning to El-Fasher today.

12. (SBU) In a January 8 press statement condemning the attack, the UN claimed that the attack occurred approximately two kilometers from Tine, when GoS forces fired small arms, RPGs and mortars at the convoy hitting one of nine fuel tankers. Observers reported that the 70-troop convoy protection force did not return fire and the convoy arrived at Tine by 2300.

13. (SBU) Despite the obvious risk in sending overland convoys, UNAMID had no choice but to re-supply its bases in West Darfur following suspension of some air re-supply operations due to JEM threats to shoot any aircraft from the skies over West Darfur (reftel). UNAMID company sites at Umm Barro (190 personnel), Tine (161) and Kulbus (244) had not re-supplied by air for almost two weeks and were critically low on supplies. By January 2, the camps had only a few days of food and fuel. Following one emergency airlift of a four-day supply of rations, UNAMID began planning the re-supply convoy by ground. Major General Karenzi, UNAMID Deputy Force Commander, said that re-supply by ground was not only due to the JEM threat, but also would show UNAMID action in the countryside and would test UNAMID logistics capabilities to supply camps using land convoys.

14. (SBU) UNAMID Chief of Staff Patrick Davidson-Houston told fieldoff January 6 that UNAMID discussed the convoy operation with locally-based GoS officials and field commanders in El Fasher, as well with movement leaders.

15. (SUB) COMMENT: This incident highlights dramatically the dangers faced by UNAMID in Darfur, and especially in West Darfur where Chadian rebels are based. The convoy was operating at night, communicating using Thuraya phones (not HF or VHF radios as would be standard for most militaries), and may not have adequately communicated its presence to GoS forces. The UNAMID spokesman downplayed the significance of the UN Headquarter's condemnation of the incident, and highlighted instead the GoS promise to investigate the incident. However, this promise is a very common Sudanese regime ploy - attack, expel, harass, destroy and then, in a show of "flexibility," offer some sort of talks or negotiations.

16. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

